

THIS YEAR IN REVIEW

The past year has been eventful and rewarding. The Management Committee (the Committee) has continued the example of the past and has conducted the business of U3A Southern Gold Coast (SGC) to the benefit of members.

We have approximately 440 members and are conducting fifty-nine courses and activities thanks to the contribution of forty-three excellent tutors.

The annual financial statement and audit are available for members at Boyd Street and Kirra Hill. It is pleasing to note that enrolment numbers have continued to increase, and subscription targets were met early again this year.

Councillor Gail O'Neill, Division 14, continues to support and assist U3A SGC. A GCCC grant recently purchased a smart TV and stand through the Community Grant scheme. We appreciate Ms. O'Neill's efforts on our behalf and look forward to continuing our association with her. Unfortunately, she is unable to attend our AGM due to Council commitments.

Councillor Josh Martin is now the Division 13 representative. When he is settled in Merry Cloutier, Meg Johnson and I will meet with him and familiarise him with U3A SGC.

U3A SGC could not function as a teaching and learning entity without our tutors and convenors who share their knowledge, skill, and enthusiasm with fellow members and who are only compensated by our appreciation.

Table Tennis continues to be popular at the Tugun Community Centre. We have seven tables which include four new tables thanks to a JAG Gambling grant. The renovation of the Tugun Community Centre has included a shed where we now store tables and equipment. We are able to maintain table tennis because of the ongoing involvement of Blair Sheppard who would welcome your assistance.

The Griffith University Engagement Series is popular this year and the number of members attending has increased. Heidi Dahles has taken over organising the lectures for our members.

The Newsletter has been retired and we hope to launch a page on the website for member participation.

We were sorry to hear that long standing member, Jim Sachs, suffered a severe reaction to his immunotherapy treatment and has not been able to continue with U3A activities. Jim has been an enthusiastic leader of the Current Affairs Discussion Group for several years and has provided entertaining commentary for the Walk and Discover Group since the class started. Jim has also been a leader of the Monday morning community table tennis and indoor bowls group since it was brought under the auspices of U3A. He has frequently volunteered his time at social functions and working bees and we will miss his contribution to our organisation.

WEBSITE AND MEMBER WIZARD

A particular 'thank you' and our gratitude to Peter Minck for his work as our webmaster. This year launching Member Wizard has been a mammoth undertaking and Peter has delivered this with endurance and patience.

Thank you to all the volunteers who contributed, and a special call out to Irene Sachs, and to John Niven for their involvement.

LOCATIONS AND VENUES

There is an absence of venues on the Gold Coast for volunteer organisations. The GCCC is aware of this and is doing what it can to ameliorate this situation. The Committee is taking on this challenge and we hope the outcome will meet members expectations.

The Palm Beach Currumbin Sports Club have generously provided a venue for some classes and currently language, history and music appreciation classes are held there.

Boyd Street is central to the U3A SGC operation, the lease has been renewed to 2029; however, it is sadly in need of refurbishment to fit our requirements. Following the GCCC restructure, the premises is now managed by a Council Infrastructure Team and the Committee will be collaborating with them to make this premises suitable.

Kirra Hill is a splendid location but as members well know, it is impractical for our needs. Whilst we will continue to use some of the rooms for our classes, the Committee is looking for a more suitable place for the office.

THE OFFICE

Anne Souter retired as office manager last year, unfortunately as there has been no one to replace her, she continues to keep the office running. We appreciate her loyalty and ongoing contribution. If anyone has exceeded what we ask of them, it is Anne.

It had been pointed out to the Committee that some U3As do not have an office, we were verging on being one of them but after our call for help, we are back to opening the office weekday mornings. To the ladies who volunteered to keep the office afloat, you do an exceptional job, thank you!

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee has been reduced to five volunteers and we had doubts as to our future viability. As there are nominations for seven positions on the Committee, I am optimistic that the year ahead will run smoothly.

Thank you to our vice president, Robin Brown; Secretary, Linda Dern; Treasurer, Merry Cloutier, and Programme Manager, Meg Johnson for your hard work and a job well done. We are looking forward to welcoming new members to the Committee after the AGM. Lauren Fabre who is joining us as Digital Technology Manager is already providing significant assistance and Greg Reid has been familiarising himself with the role of Asset Manager.

The Committee extends a sincere thank you to the two retiring members.

Liz Logan, our past president, thank you for your help and support, the Committee was sorry to lose you.

John Niven, our past Digital Technology Manager, who has left the Committee for a life on the ocean waves, has given his knowledge, skill, and time over several years. He surpassed his prior efforts during the changeover to online enrolments this year. He worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the new system and we could not have done it without him.

EVENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Events Sub-Committee continues to provide us with entertainment and enjoyment. Thank you to Chair, Blair Sheppard and Beverley Sheppard, Kay West, Gaye Bruerton and Frances Garland.

The Christmas party at Club Tweed was great fun, a traditional feast, prizes galore and entertainment provided by our own stars, the ukulele virtuosi, and the Christmas choir led by Ben McInnes, and Liz Stewart's recorder, guitar and ukulele players who were a joyful reflection of their talented teacher.

The Cancer Council Big Morning Tea has been hosted by U3A SGC for 22 years. This year was another success. The guest speaker, Ron Boaler reminded us of the value of volunteers. His story of beating cancer and seeing a need for facilities for cancer patients' families, then going on to be pivotal in filling that need in Queensland was an inspiration. Thank you for a special morning, Frances Garland.

VOLUNTEERS

Without volunteers there is no U3A SGC. It takes a lot of people to keep our organisation running smoothly. To the people who stepped up when I asked for help, thank you.

To our invisible volunteers who keep things going behind the scenes, in the garden, the lawn, the kitchen, and the library at Boyd Street, a huge thank you. Thank you also to Shirley Hunt, the new assistant to the Treasurer.

We are still looking for volunteers to fill our flexible volunteering team for the jobs that crop up from time to time. If you are a handyman, we need you to assist the Asset Manager. If you can help us with the occasional health and safety activities, we need you. We also need volunteers for the Promotions Team, can you help?

Earlier in the year, Brett Dockett assisted the Committee with the asset portfolio. Due to ill health, he is unable to continue with us. We thank him and wish him well.

This year has been a steep learning curve and apart from the Committee, a few people have patiently and generously helped me, Irene Sachs, Anne Souter, John Niven, Peter Minck, Kay West, and Heidi Dahles have all made my introduction to this role smoother. To anyone I have not mentioned and should have, I apologise and thank you all.

Vicki Harvie

President

U3A Southern Gold Coast Inc